

GREENER grass

By Robyn Sabes

Would You Be Happier With Someone Else?



When you're in a relationship, there is nothing more taboo than secretly wondering, "*Would I be happier with someone else?*" You may even feel guilty just reading these words!

The truth is, yes, you might actually be happier with someone else, have more physical intimacy, and more laughs. But, for how long? Before you decide to leave, and go play on someone else's lawn, there are a few things you should consider.

If you're considering leaving your partner because your relationship is wrought with conflict, poor communication, boredom, long-gone intimacy, resentment or anger, then ask yourself this one question: "When will my new relationship begin to look like the one I have now?"

There is a reason that your current relationship is in such poor shape, and in spite of what you may think, it's not *all* your partners fault. While a new partner may seem to bring a fresh attitude to the table, the dynamic that *you* bring to the relationship will likely not have changed much. After the newness and niceness wears off, you both are very likely to revert back to all your old habits, thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes.

New relationships are exciting, but are not an accurate portrayal of day-

to-day life with a person. In a new relationship, you both are on your best behavior. Like you, your new partner makes an extra effort to look great, smell great, and be polite. They are interesting, passionate and considerate. They laugh at your jokes, don't mind your quirks, and melt perfectly with you and your family.

But, as time passes, so does this "courtship phase," and similar problems, or even worse ones, will rear their ugly head in your new relationship too.

"But I've Changed and Grown"

Of course you've changed and grown. Many divorce lawyers hear this statement. The fact is, we all change and grow. It's a healthy part of life. It's natural to sometimes feel you've outgrown your partner. If you truly feel that your partner is no longer right for you, and you accept the theory that you are therefore free to discard this person, then you've outgrown others as well. Based on your theory, that it's ok to discard those you've outgrown, then get ready to say goodbye to your parents, siblings, children and close friends. Afterall, you're not the same person you were when you started a relationship with these people either. Hum, something to think about!

Why Does the Grass Look Greener?

If you stand on your grass, and look down, you see the grass at a perpendicular angle, and therefore see through the blades of grass, to the dirt below. This perspective always desaturates the color, and makes it look dull. However, if you look across at a nearby field, you can't see the brown, and the green color will dominate, appearing a much brighter color. Greener grass is simply a myth.

Relationship Stages

If you decide to stay in the relationship, awareness of the following phases will help you understand where your relationship is now, how it got there, and where it can go.

Courtship Phase. This is the "best behavior" stage mentioned above. Love is fresh, new, exciting, and lovebirds plan their future together.

Honeymoon Phase. This phase feels so good that you want it to last forever. In fact, you expect it to last forever! Everything seems perfect. You notice little things about your new spouse that you don't like, but you unconsciously deny or minimize them. You go above and beyond what is required or expected. You feel energized, alive, and filled with new dreams. Your heart is filled with love, and sex is frequent and great. When you're apart, you're thinking of each other. You feel a sense of finally being 'complete'.

Period of Adjustment Phase. As life turns routine, and sexual frequency lessens, as it always does, you begin to feel that love has faded too. No matter how alike you thought you were before, you're now discovering the huge differences between you and your mate. Things that you once liked about your partner have become sources of frustration and hurt feelings. This is the phase where feelings of anger, confusion and boredom begin to surface, and you might begin wondering if you're with the wrong person.

Greener Grass Phase. Love, respect, and appreciation for each other have declined, and may have even disappeared completely. You may try to avoid

your partner as much as possible. You may turn to work, or children, or some other person or thing in an attempt to meet your needs, or as a distraction. You begin to think of greener grass, and recreating that great honeymoon stage with someone else. In this phase, many couples give in to hopelessness, and make the decision to divorce. Other couples try to cope with it, by resigning themselves to a lonely life of misery.

The good news is that this phase can be the door to deeper connection and intimacy with your partner, if you make the commitment to stay, and do the work required to transform your relationship.

Transformation Phase. If you choose to stay, this is the phase in which you not only recognize that your relationship can be more than it is, but also that you have the power to make real changes. You choose to begin a whole *new* chapter in co-creating the relationship you both dreamed of, and you find renewed excitement in this *newness*.

In this stage you gain new information and insights about yourself, your partner, and the nature of marriage and relationships. You become partners in the healing and growth of the relationship. You learn and practice new tools and skills to help you move forward. Where do you get these skills? Together you seek counseling, read books, or talk to other couples who have successfully passed through these phases together.

Deep Love Phase. This is the stage of deep respect and love. You cherish one another as separate and unique individuals. It is a stage of joy, passion, intimacy, happiness and having fun together. You enjoy a true partnership, unconditional love, and safety. You finally see your partner as your best friend. It is a journey toward wholeness, in which you experience deep love.

Your Grass Can Be Greener too: If you Water It

No matter which relationship you choose, your current one, or a new one, you're still going to have to work hard to make it healthy and fulfilling. Even in your new relationship, the honeymoon phase will end, and you'll eventually find yourself back at this place again.

You can spend the rest of your life searching for a myth, or you can stay where you are, and do the work required to reach the deep love phase. If you're in the greener grass phase, then you're almost there. Do you really want to start all over now?

Writers Note: If you're in an abusive relationship, then run to the door and leave right now. Your first priority should be safety. GB

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